



The Leadership Forum- May Update

1 message

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THE LEADERSHIP FORUM

MAY 2018 UPDATE

Dear Mickey,

To: Interested and engaged leaders

The following is an update of the volunteer activity we have started in the Leadership Forum.

Database- To date we have created a confidential database of information. We are now reaching 3,131 people and have 2,668 email addresses. 463 have joint email addresses. Our emails are extremely selective and only people who “opt in” are receiving our information.

Leaders who have responded

179 individuals have committed to work, several on more than one initiative. 214 more want to stay informed and all are applauding our efforts to initiate actionable projects on the plateau.

Initiatives status:

- **Education-** Joy Clark, leader of this initiative, held a conference call and had great engagement. 33 people have volunteered to work here and this is what they decided on their first call:
 - Define the Cashiers community education world as the following five schools:

Blue Ridge School

Blue Ridge Early College

Summit Charter School

Hampton Pre-school and Early Learning Center

Cashiers Valley Pre-school

- Commit to a campaign to raise awareness and knowledge of these schools on the Plateau and the great value they all offer.
- Other ideas suggested that will be discussed in the next meeting include:

Provide a “Welcome Back” teachers breakfast

Raise awareness of school and student support programs

Create a Speakers Bureau, including lessons in civics and the Constitution.

Offer personal finance lessons to high school students through the banks

The task force is planning to meet in person on June 14th.

- **Health/Wellness-** Walter Clark leads this task force of 46 (25 are physicians)
 - Initially it is consumed with the proposed acquisition of the hospital by HCA. It is a very complex issue and all want the assurance that the hospital stays in operation with an emergency room. The volunteer board members of the hospital board and the foundation board are diligently evaluating all options and assure the community that they will make the best decision possible.
 - The task force has several other initiatives being considered and will meet in person in early June.
- **Community Housing-** John Franklin is leading this task force of 26 assisted by Linda Benge and Turner Inscoc and their first conference call is May 24th. This task force will tackle creating ways to establish housing for teachers, year-round and seasonal workers.
- **Workforce Development-** Jim Dunn leads this initiative with 16 volunteers. They held their first call on May 18th and here are a few of the actions they decided to do:
 - Research the current job placement information sources and see if there are ways that we can combine efforts (i.e. newspaper listings, web sites, Chamber of Commerce social media, etc.) and help to streamline a one-stop-shop source of offerings for employment seekers in our area.
 - Meet the Department Heads or President of Southwestern Community College to see which workforce development programs are being offered at their Cullowhee campus. Do they have a desire to expand these programs to the Cashiers area or might it be as simple as finding transportation to their campus for our children.
 - Recruit seasonal area businesses to open their facilities to off-season training and apprenticing opportunities to interested participants. For example, a culinary institute could host a residential workshop that could train qualified individuals for the food service and hospitality industry in our area. A golf course could host clinics on landscaping and turf maintenance. Another could host sessions on carpentry, plumbing, electrical work, HVAC, and so on. The unused facilities (outside of the season) in our area could be an incredible resource for this type of activity and training.

They will meet in person in June

- **Technology-** Craig Moore and the task force of 13 will hold their first conference call on May 29th. Efforts have already begun to identify and negotiate with a vendor who would supply broadband to multiple communities in the area.
- **Community Plan-** The creation of an overarching plan for Cashiers is necessary. We've worked at populating this task force with leaders who have planning experience. So far 9 have committed and will have a call shortly.
- **Culture and entertainment-** Ann Self is leading this task force of 17 and they are meeting in person on June 6th
- **Natural Resources-** There are 28 volunteers and we are finalizing a leader for the group.
- **Crime Prevention-** Jim Sacha leads this task force of 10 volunteers. They had their first call last week and dealt with very difficult crime issues. Here are a few of the actions they want to create:
 - Increase the presence of police patrols
 - Create a campaign of "See something-say something"
 - Get the papers to cover the crime issue greater
 - Assess how strong the courts are on crime
 - Get the word out about the importance of security
 - Inform the public on crime
- **Transportation and Infrastructure-** Jim Poche, leader of the task force of 33 have already been busy. Jim hosted a session of locals at the community room in Chattooga Ridge. The group is planning an in-person session in June.
 - Pedestrian safety- The task force is collaborating with other community stakeholders to move forward on building sidewalks on Frank Allen Road, Hwy 64 and back down Hwy 107 to Frank Allen Road. A surveyor and engineer have been chosen and bids are in for these two pieces. Plans, state approvals and funding are being worked on.

Other issues:

- **Additions to the Crime Prevention task force-** we are seeking to add people to this initiative so if you are interested, please email me. Few realize how serious an issue this is. Review the notes above and decide if you want to help.
- **Commissioners meeting attendance-** One factor contributing to the perceived lack of county support is the appearance of indifference by Cashiers residents. Seldom does anyone from Cashiers attend the commissioner meetings. Three from the Leadership Forum have already committed to go and your attendance is encouraged. There is a meeting on June 4th at 2:55 PM in Silva for the public to make comment on the 2018-19 budget. The regular meeting of commissioners starts at 3:00 so, you can see, they are expecting no more than 5 minutes of public comment.
- **Commissioners-** We have 2 commissioners who know what we are doing and support it, Ron Mau and Micky Luker. We need help influencing the other 3 commissioners to support Cashiers initiatives.
- **Cashiers Small Area Plan-** The consultants who were hired by the county to do a recommended plan for Cashiers are holding a charrette at the library on June 4-6. They are trying to obtain all the public input they can to make their recommendations. If you can go, please do so. The plan will become the key point of reference for the county to support. Here are the times for the sessions at the Cashiers Community Center:

- June 4th 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM
 - June 5th 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM and 5:00 PM-8:00 PM
 - June 6th 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM
- **Hospital-**The sale of the Highlands Cashiers Hospital (Mission) to HCA- Mission Health has entered into a letter of intent to sell itself to HCA, a profit-making corporation. The proceeds from the sale will go into a new foundation (501C3) and will be used to support causes in Western North Carolina. None of the funds can go to HCA. If this sale does proceed, the current foundation would become a public charity, supporting health and wellness initiatives on the plateau.
- **Funding for initiatives-** As you can imagine, most of the initiatives are going to have a need for funds. We are working to create a plan that accomplishes this.
- **Collaboration-** The forum is not about working on its' own creating stand-alone initiatives unless necessary. It will collaborate with other community organizations to get things accomplished.